

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed June 6, 2006 ("Office Action"). At the time of the Office Action, Claims 1-19 were pending in the application. In the Office Action, Claims 9-19 have been withdrawn from consideration. The Office Action rejects Claims 1-8 and objects to Claim 7. Applicants have amended Claims 1-2, 4, and 6-8. Applicants have cancelled Claims 3 and 5. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Section 112 Rejections

The Office Action rejects Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. The Applicants have amended Claims 1-2, 4, and 6-8 based on the Examiner's recommendations. Reconsideration and favorable action is requested.

Section 103 Rejections

The Office Action rejects Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 1,906,422 to Roulton ("*Roulton*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,950,717 to Fay ("*Fay*"). The Office Action rejects Claims 1-6 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combined teachings of U.S. Patent No. 4,129,180 to Larinoff ("*Larinoff*") , *Fay*, and *Roulton*. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Independent Claim 1, as amended, is allowable at least because *Roulton* fails to disclose, expressly or inherently, the combination of "a plurality of valves which each have an inlet and an outlet, said inlets of said valves being physically spaced from each other at predetermined positions" and "fluid communication structure providing fluid communication between said inlet of each said valve and said second portion of said conduit." The Office Action relies on *Roulton* as disclosing a previous version of these limitations; however, *Roulton* fails to disclose, expressly or inherently, "a plurality of valves which each have an inlet and an outlet, said inlets of said valves being physically spaced from each other at predetermined positions" and "fluid communication structure providing fluid communication between said inlet of each said valve and said second portion of said conduit." For instance, *Roulton* fails to disclose a plurality of valves in fluid communication with each heating unit.

See Roulton, Fig 1, Page 2, Lines 39-55. Instead, *Roulton*, merely discloses one valve 9 in fluid communication with each heating unit. *See id.* Additionally, *Roulton* fails to disclose, expressly or inherently, that the valves are physically spaced from each other at predetermined positions. *See Roulton*, Fig. 1. For at least this reason, Independent Claim 1, as amended, is allowable, as are Claims 2, 4, and 6-8 that depend therefrom. Reconsideration and favorable action is requested.

CONCLUSION

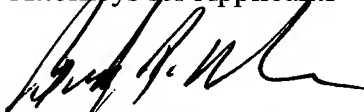
Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all pending claims.

If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the Examiner is invited to contact Bradley P. Williams, Attorney for Applicants, at the Examiner's convenience at (214) 953-6946.

Applicants believe no other fees are due, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 8/2/06

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